Minutes
Point Board Meeting
October 10-15, 1972

The meeting was held at a farm in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains owned by Gurney Norman, Chloe Scott, Ron and Ron and Paula Bevirt. The farm is a 140 acre spread four miles inland from the sea, where a lot of Redwood and Fir trees grow, where eight people live in teepees, cabins and two main farm houses, with a garden and an orchard nearby. Dick Raymond, as host for this Point meeting, arranged for the folks at the farm to support the meeting with meals cooked in Hassler's and Paula's house while the meeting went on in Gurney's and Chloe's house, under the olive trees.

Board members present were Stewart Brand, Dick Raymond, Huey Johnson, Jerry Mander and Mike Phillips. Joan McIntyre was the Elijah. Gurney Norman sat in as recording secretary.

The meeting began about 10:30 a.m. when Stewart asked Joan to report on her activities as a Point agent. (Point had previously granted Joan some money and loaned her some other money to carry out Project Jonah, a save-the-whales campaign). Joan said the first thing she did upon receiving the money was go crazy. The thing that drove her crazy was trying to figure out how to spend money on an infinity of possibilities. She was confronted with questions like: how do I really view money? and, what is the nature of my social responsibilities? Especially since there was "not enough money to make a mistake with," Joan experienced true psychic distress.

"Did the money make you feel different about your project?" Stewart asked.

Joan thought about that a minute. Then she said that when her crazy period passed, she went ahead and did what she had already intended to do before she got the money.

Stewart announced a hypothesis: "When we give money to people without a project, we paralyze them. If they already have a project, they go on. Money is not a creativity-producer."

"Money feels good to people who are clear about their own goals and want to be doing," ~~Dick~~ thought. (see attached note).

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Huey
Mike

Jerry
Steward

Dick ?

Continuing, Joan said she was tempted at one point to write a book on her Project Jonah ~~xxxfar~~ experience so far (which experience included an expedition to Scanlon's Lagoon in Mexico; organizing in Stockholm during the U.N. Conference where she sought to ~~make~~ "make whales the symbol of the conference;" visits with fisheries agencies on Malta and in Naples; attendance at the ~~International Whaling~~ Comm. in London; hiking in the Alps for two days) but she decided against a book and has plunged into political action on behalf of whales, namely an intensive effort to organize a boycott of products made by arch-whalers, the Japanese. ~~Jxxxxx~~ Project Jonah now operates from an office in San Francisco, with Dianna Shugart as a paid helper.

Huey Johnson asked the Board to clarify the kind of financial support Point has given to Joan's campaign. Jerry Mander (having arrived late but exceedingly refreshed from a two-mile hike out Last Chance Road, before being rescued by Hassler) said it was a $20,000 loan that he had requested on Joan's behalf. Huey asked what the board's policy was on loans. There followed a general rap about the whole thing of loaning money. What are our governing proceedures? Huey wanted to know. And after the rap had circled a few more times, without discernible conclusion, Huey said, "I think loans are disasters."

Jerry's Report

Stewart asked Jerry to report on his activities as a Board member since Point's last meeting. Jerry said he had discovered two sides to himself as a Point agent: A. his "main side," in which he finds himself "behaving in some way other than usual. It's a personal trip," he said. "An exploration into myself." B. But Jerry also found himself behaving with responsibility for the world. He said he has sought out people, ideas and things to do, but he also functioned passively, seeing all people who sought his advice, being generally available to people who needed his help. He said he had had hundreds of raps with people, "but none of it seemed like work."

"Was your advice to people good?" asked Stewart.

"Yeah, I think it was good," said Jerry. "If they came back for more, I knew it was good."

Jerry said he had spent a lot of time on Public service media, and with Joan on ~~xxx~~ Project Jonah. He said he spent some money on himself in the form of expenses as he went about doing good, "but I spent it conscious of myself, and Point."

"That's about the money," said Stewart. "What about the role?"

"I feel like I've changed my life totally this year," Jerry replied. "Whether that will add up to more buildings stopped, I doubt it. I found out it's a lot easier to talk about not doing than to not do. I've found myself givingup expectations of myself as a male in the world." Jerry added that all of this is useful to the world only if he communicates it. "I don't want to do ads anymore," he said. "I've got an idea for a children's book."

Jerry reported that he gave $1,500 to the Marijuana Education Fund, and that he gave some bread to Esalen to save their children's school there, and ~~to~~ $1,000 to build ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ a staff (or "union") room at Esalen.

"I consider all the Esalen money was just wasted," he said.

~~XThexxxxxxxxxx

around, and so the simple thing to do is append that letter to the minutes, and plunge on into Huey's soul).

Huey said that as a Point Board member, "I have developed experiences, and confidence to move into vacuums." He said that he could see real change occurring as a result of his action, "although the idea of giving money away still bothers me more than raising it." His role as a Point agent has changed him personally, he said. "Fifteen thousand dollars is freedom!" The vacation he took as a Point guy was great. Of the Stockholm Conference, he said, "I think it was one of the most important meetings of people in human history. I realized that we're going to survive."

When Jerry asked, "If Proposition 14 passes, will you still have that opinion?" Huey replied, "I think we're in the middle of a fantastic revolution."

Huey said he has been agenting at a frightening pace, but that he is trying to learn to discipline himself with time. He then went on to describe some things he has been into, and thinking about:

A. Getting an article in Saturday Review exposing the planned power-generating complex in Montana reputed to be "25 times larger than Four Corners." His friend and cohort Bill Bryan is in Montana developing a model of new Judo-Guerrilla eco-tactics.

B. England's policy of placing land in a National Trust, as a possible model for use in this country.

C. Suggesting to Internal Revenue Sservice that the U.S. study England's system of death taxes as they apply to lands and estates of deceased people.

D. Tourism and environment: encouraging the tourist industry, businesses such as airlines and tourist cities like Acapulco, to promote ecology in their own best interests. Perhaps cities like Acapulco could be given recognition and awards for stopping shitting in the ocean.

Referring to Huey's rap about Judo-Guerrilla tactics as a means of people-power, Dick Raymond asked how that stuff affected the democratic process? Does democracy work anymore? There was some rap about this idea, but not much. Let's talk about that later, someone said.

Mike Phillips' Report

"Disregard the letter I sent out," Mike said. A nine-page report of methodology, "better off lost in the mail." More important is Mike's list of his expenditures for Point, to wit: (See attached letter).

~~The Creative People List~~

"Two-thirds of my time is now consumed by Point," Mike said. "I'm beginning to see the connection in the things I'm doing. I've learned two things in particular: that I'm totally uncomfortable in the philanthropist role; and I'm especially uncomfortable with hands-off philanthropy."

"What's hands-off philanthropy?" Stewart wanted to know.

"I can't give money to people who aren't in my peer group," said Mike. He recounted a horror-story about giving some Glide money to some black ex-cons who went to Sears and bought rifles, and who even now drive around in, and refuse to surrender, a car Glide rented.

"I've decided I have responsibility only to my peers," said Mike. "To change my peers' attitudes."

Mike has sex, religion and corporate responsibility on his mind. "A massive religious awakening is inevitable," he said. And, "My interest in sex is from the belief that change in culture comes from new points of view about sex." He cited the revolutionary impact of Freud as an example.

"Why do we want to know why people fuck each other?" Jerry wanted to know.

"What we want to know is why two people come together," Mike replied.

Jerry said he'd been reading Engles, and that Engles said that at some point, men took sex over.

Mike said he spent $800 setting up the Corporate Gorilla Conference, and that it was "very elegant."

He said his Creative People List had 2,200 names on it at last count, and that he was getting 20 letters a day about the thing. "Some of the people on the list want to get together." A new form of network? Perhaps evolving into new structures?

"I worry about that list," Jerry worried. "How influenced by the media was it?"

"What do you mean?"

"How many real unknowns were there on the list?"

"They're mostly unknown people," Mike said.

Joan wanted to talk about what Mike had said about being unable to give money to anybody outside his peer group. If that is true of everybody on the Board, then there is a real need to diversify the membership, she said. Stewart said they'd get into board structure later on.

LUNCH & FOOTBALL

Stupendous sandwiches by the Kitchen Crew. Then it was the Bad Guys (Dick, Stewart, Mike) against the Good Guys (Joan, Huey, Gurney) in an awesome test of defensive strength, since nobody could do a goddamn thing offensively. The game raged up and down the field, with neither team able to score in spite of the addition of late-arriving Larry Klein to the Good Guys, and Jerry, back from his walk, to the Bad Guys. The Bad Guys finally won on the last play of the game when Stewart tagged Gurney in his end zone for a safety.

Larry Klein's Report

At Stewart's request, Larry rand down the dispute between Point and Random House, in which Random House withheld a bunch of money from the third quarterly payment to Point, claiming a retroactive publisher's cost that Point thought they had no right to. Larry and Random's lawyers reached a compromise agreement, but the decision now is: does Point want to audit Random House's books? The Board seemed to want to, for, as Jerry said, "Publishers steal." The Board asked Larry to get information about conducting an audit from Don Gerrard.

For the sake of the California State Franchise Tax Board, Larry asked Point to ammend its articles of incorporation to include the statement, "Our property is committed to charitible purposes." There was a motion and and a second for the ammendment, and it was thus resolved.

Stewart Brand's Report

"It looks like Point and the Zen Center are in for a long, good friendship," Stewart remarked in announcing that he gave $3,000 to the Zen Center Work Company.

He also reported granting $4,000 to J.D. Smith for J.D.'s traveling repairshop cruise about the country.

An individual grant to Stella Leach of $1,500 was stopped because, as Stewart said, "Stella was a mistake."

But Charles Watson aint! He's doing true heroics, awakening the public to its stake in public lands, hassling and exposing the Bureau of Land Management.

Stew gave money to Bill Getz, to help him conduct his survey of emergency help facilities in communities across the country.

Then Stewart launched a discussion of "demand for justification" when he said "I think it was inappropriate to demand justification" of how Stephanie Mills spent Point money on her salon in Stockholm. Stewart and Huey rapped about justification a while, boiling it down to: does demand for justification help or hinder the agent?

Joan said, "Justification is a way for a person who is making the grant to cover himself."

Huey, Dick and Mike disagreed, one of them saying, "There are too many people who have good ideas who are at the end of their rope,"

Stewart said that rap could wait, and went on with his report.

He said he gave money to Life Forum and Project Jonah. He gave time to being on call for advice, being in the Point office, and vacationing in Nova Scotia. He said he and Lois had separated.

And then, there it was again: Stockholm. Stewart said these things:

"I got pretty burned out in Stockholm."

"I was the target for a lot of organized animosity from the Swedish left."

"Fifteen Indians stole every stage in town."

"I brought leftover 60's thinking and a lot of uninformed expectations of Europe."

"There was a lot of frustration and pain and blame going around Stockholm."

"I think we got a good performance but it was either in the wrong movie, or bad casting."

"What did you think about Life Forum, Jerry?"

And Jerry said:

"Yecccchhhhh."

Dick Raymond's Report

Dick said he had been moping a lot, and that it had been fruitful. He's been thinking about money, wondering what it is. Fred Moore is one of Dick's agents. Dianna Shugart was too, till she gave her grant money back, and resigned as Point secretary.

There was some talk about agents and agenting at this point. Dick said Bill English is resigning from Point. There was talk about Janet Flagle.

Stewart said, "From our point of view, there are no bad agents, there are only bad grants. ... When I make a grant, I would like it to be one I can be proud of in front of this group."

Joan encouraged the Point Board to criticize each other's individual agent-selections.

General Appraisal

Stewart started the appraisal by being heavy on the agent concept. "I don't think it's been useful," he said. "Peripheral intelligence is not so hot."

"What's the purpose of Point?" Joan asked.

"Today we've collected vibes from everybody," said Jerry. "Nobody seems satisfied with the whole trip. It's functioning okay, but there's this funny discomfort. I feel strongly that we're all similar peoplexxxx : none of us are any good at giving money away."

"What Jerry is saying," said Mike, "is that the overall feeling is, that the expectation is greater than the effect. I think that's the basis to answer Joan's question."

"We've got a negative goal," said Stewart. "To avoid being like other foundations."

"What's the expectation of Point's work?" Joan asked.

"Excitement!" Huey exclaimed. "Satisfaction! An extension of our energy...if the agent concept has failed,

it's because we haven't led, haven't inspired."

"I think it's time Point graduated to its next level," said Dick.

"Right," said Jerry. "We need a new way to operate. We're locked into a general paradigm."

Stewart asked what the other foundations think about Point. Dick and Mike said that a lot of foundations are aware of Point, that they are watching it.

Huey and Jerry got into a two-way talk then about whether or not Point was in good shape, doing anything really worthwhile. Huey was convinced that Point is doing fine, and he encouraged Jerry to not be depressed about it. "I think the Good Works Collective is a really good idea," Huey said.

"I think Point ought to open up its process more," said Joan. "It needs more diversity. Every race, color, creed ought to be represented on the board."

Jerry said he was for expanding the Board by fifty per cent and making them all women.

Someone asked the Board if the members would like to work more closely with other members.

Stewart: No.

Dick. Yes. "Linkage."

Huey: No. "If feels about right to me."

Jerry: "It feels about right."

Mike: Well.

Joan took the floor for a few minutes then to rap about herself as a spokesman for the animals, and about her ideal for people to live "in basic relationship to nature.

"Manipulation is the problem," said Jerry. "There's an ethical paradox in the goal that only the good, talented people should run the world. It's not <u>who</u> has the power..."

"Let's talk about resentment," said Stewart. "I resent being treated like the U.S. Government, who should represent everybody...The fallacy in the free money business is that we're seen as the keepers of the people's money...That's a crippling notion to operate with." Stewart said he resists the idea that what Point does respresents anything. "I think we should be very quirky, very fractional in our makeup," he said. "The public helps fuck up foundations."

"I sure do get a lot of pressure from my friends," said Mike.

I'm more interested in being an inventor than a power-holder," said Stewart. "Softwar!"

The rap shifted to the subject of Stewart's impending departure from Point. Stewart is into a life-change, he said, and he doesn't feel like he's that good a director anymore. He wants to get on past the Catalog, and he would like to see the Point board move in the direction of self-enhancement."

New Ideas

"The discretionary fund fragments us and takes us away from the one-shit theory," someone said, and what Joan wanted to know was how come these Point guys never talk about a million dollars, never mention it as the actual sum they have to spend.

Hem. Haw.

Then there was Larry saying, "Starting with money is ass-backwards. You have to begin with projects."

"Free money is freak money," said Dick. "Money has to be put back into the system it is from, in a way that improves that system." Dick also said, "I think it's important to go down the hill in the same gear you went up in."

The New Ideas session broke off there for supper.

Supper

Turkey, yams, all the trimmings.

Evening Session

Stewart opened by posing two questions: 1. what does Point do with the current season? 2. what is our policy on board-member succession?

But Joan wasn't going to let him get away with that stick-to-the-agenda shit. Right there sat Gurney, utterly unscheduled, and she asked him to say some stuff about himself and that Appalachia place he always manages to work into all conversation within his hearing. So he held forth for ten minutes about his old homeplace, said it was a mountain region long as California, had twenty million people in it, had an intact folk culture

in spite of nearly a century of exploitation and colonization by coal, steel and lumber industries.

Now, Stewart, you were saying?

Should Point keep the three-year kickout of board members policy?

Yes.

As a general guideline, do we feel like working hard in the fall, winter and spring, and taking summers off?

Yes.

Should Point repeat last year's money pattern?

Stewart said, "It will repeat unless we change it." He went on to recommend that Point let the money-pattern begin in the fall, start a new cycle on a chosen date, with no money accrural in the individual accounts. There was general agreement to this, so Stew moved that the chosen date be November 1, with each Board member beginning with a new account of $5,000 for the year, and no accrural from the previous year. Huey seconded, the motion passed. (Secretary's note: Larry, you may want to draft that motion formally).

Stewart then moved that each board member be left free to choose to employ agents, or not, at his own discretion. This was not formally seconded and passed, but it seemed to be accepted as a working agreement.

It was ten p.m. by now, late in the game and the players were weary with fatigue. On behalf of the Concretists, Stewart gamely tried one more off-tackle shot ("There are two areas of policy, internal and external") but Joan blitzed ("There is no free money. Money is surplus energy") and Stewart was forced to punt, a magnificent kick that carried the agenda end over end to the Abstractionists twelve yard line. Mike might have made a short runback, but he opted for a fair catch ("We all got emotionally comfortable with money-weight last year").

"Was it comfort?" asked Stewart. "Or familiar, and slightly skillful?"

AND THEN EVERYBODY WENT TO BED.

AND THEN everybody got up.

BREAKFAST!

Morning Session: Second Day

"Gee folks."

That was Stewart's response to a lot of groovy flattering stuff everybody said about wanting him to reconsider leaving Point. Jerry Stewart said his sense of timing in leaving was related to finding a replacement. And that opened up the whole subject of succession.

Stewart said he thought the President of the Board definitely ought to live in the Bay Area. And maybe all the members should live in the area. What did everybody think?

"A replacement ought to be a kindred soul," said Huey. "And approved by unanimous ballott."

"Maybe we should let the individual name his own replacement," said Stewart.

"The replacement process is vital for the life of the organization," said Mike.

"We definitely ought to open the process up," said Dick.

And what about firing? "Does the board have the power to fire any of its members?"

Discussion of this question led to agreement that if there is unamimous disapproval of a board member by all the other members, then he is kicked out by some means or other. Dick suggested the Board ammend its retirement rule and add that a vote of six or seven members be sufficient to fire a fellow member.

But Jerry was against that. "I'm against that," he said.

Stewart said, "I'ts a goat-manufacturing machine. Beware of any organization without the ability to fire."

"Well," said Mike. "I don't think very fast. But I do know that the replacement process is one of utmost importance. What we're hoping for is that Point will have vitality for ten good years."

The issue was finally tabled, but not before someone in the wings called out: "Hiring and firing are a related process!"

Dick wanted to say something about his Godfather idea. He didn't elaborate on it, just said it was something he was thinking about as he thought of ways in general to bring "potency to Point." He mentioned Dick Baker and Huey Johnson as people in a Godfather role, surrounded by activist agents to whom they give help, advice and inspiration.

It was determined that Jerry would be host for the next Point meeting, on November 9.

The meeting was into its last two hours by now, and Stewart asked Joan to say something about the experience she'd just had as Point's Elijah.

"It's been instructive and interesting to me," she said. "But I'm not sure if I have been, for the board...The Elijah gives the Board the illusion that it is listening to more voices than it actually does." Joan began to cry then, and it took her a moment to control her voice again. "I feel the same anger here in this room that I felt in London," she said. "You're just the male-aggressive world that will not listen to other voices. It becomes very aggressive and very ugly."

Stewart said to Joan, "Just because you got some resistance doesn't mean you weren't heard."

There was a lot of silence in through here, Dick said, "All of our decisions are made in the way we do business," and Jerry said, "Other sensibilities would make decisions in other ways."

Huey and Jerry got into an extended two-way dialogue. It was happening too fast to get any accurate notes, but the burden of their debate centered around the question: what is the ultimate function of this group?

Is it a tool?

Or is it an organism?

"I believe there are at large in the world thousands of ways to achieve change," said Jerry.

"Point is in a specialized business," Stewart said. "We look for strange marriages that will connect, rather than batter."

"I'd like to learn the hard side," Joan said. "But I have ways that you could learn, too."

The meeting was ending. Huey had to split. People were standing up, about to go outside to walk in the rain. Gurney called out a general invitation to all Point people to come back to the farm sometime, and have a ceremony in the meadow.

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